



Dungog & Gresford Parishes

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

St Mary's Church, Brown Street, Dungog; **St Patrick's Church**, Rifle Street, Clarence Town; **St Helen's Church**, Park Street, East Gresford; **Sacred Heart Church**, Summerhill Road, Summerhill via Vacy.

2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR C

27 APRIL 2025

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Parish Bulletin: published each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays. Copies of the Bulletin are available from the Parish website which is updated weekly.

Parish Website: updated regularly with copies of the bulletin and other information and is found at www.dungoggresfordcatholic.org.au.

Safeguarding Promotion: For all safeguarding concerns within the parishes, please contact Fr Andrew.

A Pastoral Note ...

In writing this particular column, I was immediately confronted with what I had written for last week.

Admittedly, as is usual, the column was written a couple of days before the actual 'day' it appears, largely because of the demands of having to have it ready for printing before it would actually be read by anyone other than Kerry!

And yet, even in the face of all that happened after it being written and before it might have been read, there's nothing that would change the essential thrust of what I had written.

Yes, it is true that over the weekend of Easter Sunday we heard the news of the death of Fr Maurie Cahill, our priestly elder, and we would be confronted with the sad news of the death of Pope Francis on Easter Monday (Rome time), yet we remain an Easter people.

Our faith the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, whose triumph over death we celebrate at Easter, also means that, for us, death is not the end.

As the first Preface for the Dead reminds us: "*In [Christ] the hope of blessed resurrection has dawned, that those saddened by the certainty of dying might be consoled by the promise of immortality to come. Indeed for your faithful, Lord, life is changed not ended, and, when this earthly dwelling turns to dust, an eternal dwelling is made ready for them in heaven.*"

While the earthly journey of Fr Maurie and Pope Francis has come to its end – as will every human's journey at the God-chosen time – our faith tells us that their ultimate destination is the eternal embrace of God's unbounded and merciful love.

Christ's Resurrection means that death doesn't have the final say, that death is ultimately not victorious, that, for people with faith in Christ,

death is not something to be afraid of. This belief, this certainty, is at the very heart of our cry, "Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed!"

So as we continue our journey through the Season of Easter, and do so as an Easter people who revel in Christ's victory, let's celebrate the life of those who have lived, yet also celebrate our belief that they are now with God for eternity.

Χριστός Ανέστη!

Fr Andrew



Have you thought?

Does he mean us?

When Thomas made his declaration of faith, Jesus said, 'You believe because you can see me. Happy (or Blessed) are those who have not seen and yet believe.' (v29) Because this gospel was written 60 years or so after the time of Jesus, there were indeed many who believed but had not ever seen him. The blessing is on all those who believe without the benefit of a physical encounter of Jesus. Whilst the gospel was written as an acknowledgement of those at the end of the 1st Century, it is also a blessing and encouragement for believers of today!



Memorial Mass for His Holiness Pope Francis

On **Monday, 28 April 2025 at 6:30pm**, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will gather at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newcastle West for a special Mass to commemorate Pope Francis, offering fervent prayers for the repose of his soul. This sacred liturgy will take place after his funeral in Rome, uniting us with the global Catholic community in prayerful remembrance and thanksgiving.

The Catholic Diocese welcomes all across our region to come together in solemn reflection and communal prayer, honouring the life and legacy of a Pope who embodied humility, mercy, and unwavering commitment to the Gospel.

Guided by the Church's sacred rites and traditions, this commemorative Mass will serve as a profound expression of the spiritual bond many shared with Pope Francis, remembering him not for status or power, but for his deep humanity and tireless devotion to the mission of Christ and His Church.

All are welcome – Catholics and members of other faith traditions – to join in this tribute to a spiritual leader who inspired millions across the world through compassion, courage, and a heart open to all communities.

Event Details

Date: Monday, 28 April 2025

Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter Street, Newcastle West NSW

Presider: Bishop Michael Kennedy, Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle

Let us come together as a diocesan community to give thanks for the life of Pope Francis and commend him to God's eternal embrace.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Michael Kennedy

Dungog Shire Palliative Care Volunteers

The Dungog Shire Palliative Care Volunteers are celebrating their 30th anniversary...and you're invited!

A morning tea will take place on Wednesday 14 May from 9.30am to 11.30am at the Anglican Church Hall, Dowling Street, Dungog.

Please RSVP by Thursday 1 May to 0457 846 806.

ACBC Election Statement

The Election Statement from the Australian Catholic Bishops is now available and can be found on the 'Resources' page of our website.

As we prepare to cast our votes next Saturday, please take the opportunity to carefully pray about how best to exercise your franchise.

Homily by Richard Leonard

The earliest Christian community focused strongly on the wounds of the Risen Lord for two reasons: to affirm the fact that Christ, now raised from the dead was the same person who had lived with them; and also to make sense of the physical wounds being inflicted on them for Christ's sake.

The story of Thomas, even with its mystical details, counters a magical notion of what the resurrection is about. Jesus bears the marks of his torture and death. His glorified body, though different, is connected to how the disciples knew and loved him. They can recognise him through his words and his wounds.

We know the community of Ephesus, for which this Gospel is written, was experiencing great persecution. Is it any wonder, one generation from the earliest disciples, that the sign of Christ's risen presence are *his* marks of suffering?

Our own world continues to be intrigued by manifestations of Jesus' wounds. Do you remember when a well-known television reporter went in search of mystics and stigmatics? The television network ratings soared. Everyone from the true believer to the cynic wanted to see if the hands really bled, or the wounds really wept. Whatever the truth of these private revelations and experiences, it seems words and wounds still make a claim on us today.

You and I know, however, that we don't have to go to a stigmatic to see Christian battle wounds. We carry within us the death of the Lord. We all have our wounds. And we also know that, for many of us, it is precisely when we are wounded most deeply by life, that our doubts in the presence of God are greatest.

The Easter story is not that we should be ashamed of this, or pretend it doesn't happen. Today's Gospel reminds us that it is into this chaos that Christ comes with words of peace, with empathy from the one who was wounded for our sake and with the mission to forgive as we are forgiven.

I remember struggling with some personal issues in the Jesuit novitiate. I'm told that's what these places are for! One day, when I felt lowest about myself, the novice master, adapting Psalm 118, said to me, 'you realise that the stone rejected by the builder becomes the corner stone.' By this he meant that often God takes that part of ourselves we don't like, forgives it, heals it, and uses it most powerfully to demonstrate that the pattern of the life, death and resurrection of Christ continues in all believers who bear his name and carry his wounds.

And that's what happened to Thomas. Christ took his fear, his doubts and his disbelief and through the wounds of healing and peace transformed

them into a powerful Christian witness that has sustained generations of us who struggle with life and faith.

So at this Easter Eucharist we are offered the same opportunity to discover that the stone rejected within us, or among us, is that which God wants to use as the cornerstone. And when this happens we can cry with the psalmist, 'This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.'

© Richard Leonard SJ

Richard Leonard SJ is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.

Historical Context

My Lord and my God

By the time the Gospel of John was written – in the last decade of the 1st Century – there were already diverse beliefs about Jesus. As is recorded in the gospels, there were those who regarded Jesus as one of the prophets of Israel; others recognised him as the promised Messiah; others still had come to believe in Jesus the Christ as the incarnation of God. That is certainly the theology expressed in the Gospel of John. Perhaps as a means to further his community's theology and correct other ideas, the gospel writer has Thomas declare, "My Lord and my God!"

Electronic Banking Details

BSB: 066 739
A/c Name: Catholic Development Fund
Reference: Your Surname and/or Envelope No., or other reference.

Account Nos:

First collection: 100 029 440

Second collection:

Dungog:	100 005 170
Gresford	100 005 173

Today's Liturgy:

Scripture Readings:

1st Acts 5:12-16

2nd Revelation 1:9-13, 17-19

Gospel John 20:19-31

Responsorial Psalm:

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; happy those who have not seen me, but still believe!

Alleluia!

Memorial Acclamation:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection,
until you come again.



Papal Prayer Intention for April:

"Let us pray that the use of new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times."

In Your Charity, Please Pray For:

Those Who Have Died: Pope Francis, Fr Maurie Cahill

Those Whose Anniversary of Death Is In April: Bede Gehrig, Ruth Jones, Lenore McDermott, Paula Murphy, Robert Holdom, Dorothy Bowtell, Rex Garland, Bruno Rocco, Herbert John Preece, Allie Allen, Peter Allen, Tom O'Driscoll, Paddy Kilpinen, Bill Tyne, Neil Faber, Lyn Barry, Michael Flanagan, Paul Cooper.

Those Who Are Sick: Maryann Smith, Daphne Bond, Leonie Young, Lisa Reid, Bev Herbert, Warren Wade, Irene Robinson, Luke Barry, Kathie Maynard, Kevin Ward, David Loudon, Michaela Brown, Phillip Hartup, Anne Newman, Graham McCarthy, Keith Edwards, Neville Barry, Susan Barlow, Allwyn Gippel, Christine Elliott, Jean Robertson, Jessica Byron, Gwen Trappel, Tom Redgrove, John Newton.

The Parish Diary (for the week ahead...)

Second Week of Easter

Monday 28 April

Memorial of St Peter Chanel

6.30pm Memorial Mass for Pope Francis @ Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Tuesday 29 April

Memorial of St Catherine of Siena

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Wednesday 30 April

8.30am Mass @ Dungog

Thursday 1 May

9.30am Mass @ East Gresford

Friday 2 May

Memorial of St Athanasius

11am Anointing Mass @ Lara Aged Care

Saturday 3 May

Feast of Sts Philip and James

5.30pm Mass @ East Gresford

Sunday 4 May

Third Sunday of Easter

8am Mass @ Clarence Town

9.30am Mass @ Dungog

Alleluia!

Safeguarding in our Parishes means ...

The Parishes of Dungog & Gresford hold that children, young people and vulnerable adults are a gift from God with an intrinsic right to dignity of life, respect and security from physical and emotional harm. They are to be treasured, nurtured and safeguarded.

In line with the Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, our parishes have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and are committed to safeguarding all who interact with the parishes through our activities, ministries and services, especially children and adults at risk.

The Catholic Parishes of Dungog and Gresford acknowledge the people of the Worimi and Wonnarua nations, on whose traditional lands we gather, live, and work. We acknowledge their continuing deep and abiding attachment to the land.

We acknowledge their cultural heritage and beliefs, pay our respects to their Elders – past, present, and emerging – and commit ourselves to working together for reconciliation and justice.